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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT

INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

50X1

COUNTRY Bulgaria

DATE DISTR. 26 April 1951

SUBJECT Uranium Ore Reduction Plant and Mine
East of Buhovo

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(LISTED BELOW)

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DATE OF
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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. A new factory was completed during 1948 on a site which is approximately 500 to 600 meters east of Buhovo. This factory is constructed of concrete and wood, is three stories high, and is about 100 meters wide and 300 meters long. [] it is a uranium reduction plant []

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- a. In 1948 there were three operating rooms in the factory, each of which contained 8 wooden vats, open at the top and connected in series. They were approximately 7 to 8 meters high, 4 to 5 meters in diameter, and 5 centimeters thick. There is a 20 to 30 horse-power water pump on every vat.
- b. The ore was loaded in these vats by hand and washed with warm water for about 4 to 5 hours. At the end of this operation the water is drained off and some kind of acid poured into the vats. The acid was allowed to remain in the vats for 17 to 18 hours and then drained off into large cement (sic) cisterns.
- c. After the acid treatment another warm water washing took place. When this water was drained off, what remained in the vats looked like light green crystals (sic).
- d. Ten truckloads of ore were put into each vat, and each truckload was estimated to be 4,500 pounds.
- e. An estimated 2 to 3 tons of the refined product was obtained from each vat in one complete operation. This product was packed in cases, 80 x 40 x 40 centimeters, made of "heavy wood" and immediately transported to a highly guarded area in the Yana railroad yards. [] estimates that 500 to 600 cases per day were transported from the factory to Yana. [] these cases were then shipped to the U.S.S.R.

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STATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NAVY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NSRB															
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2. There is a mining operation about five kilometers north of the factory. The ore obtained from the mine is brown in color. It was packed in heavy paper bags, each weighing approximately 50 to 60 kilograms. There were 500 to 600 trucks carrying the ore from the mine to the plant. Each truck carried 40 to 50 bags, and it is estimated that each truck made 10 trips per day.

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3. laborers and working conditions in the plant and the mine

- a. There were 2000 to 3000 laborers working at the reduction plant all of whom were civilians. There were also about 1500 Trudovaks doing carpentry work, menial labor, and transporting the full cases of processed material to Yana. The plant was under the supervision of about 100 Russian officers and civilian engineers.

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- c. There were three eight-hour shifts working in both the mine and plant.

- d. All those working in the plant proper wore gas masks.

- e. at least 10 to 15 persons per week, in both the mine and the plant, became ill. Their faces became yellow, and they usually complained of pains in their chests. Some were treated in the mine and plant area, but many were sent to hospitals in Sofia.

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- f. Each morning before going to work every laborer in the mine and plant was required to drink one kilogram of milk.

- g. The majority of those working in the mine and plant lived in Sofia. In 1947 construction was begun of a workers settlement near Buhovo.

- h. All those working at the mine and plant received periodic instructions not to speak about their work.

4. Special security precautions were exercised in the area of the plant and mine:

- a. While the factory was being constructed, a road which passed in front of the site and which residents of Buhovo commonly took to go to their fields, was diverted 200 to 300 meters to the south. Use of the original road was limited to those who worked in the factory. No pass was required of those using the new road.

- b. Guard posts were set up at 20 to 25 meter intervals around the plant area; 100 militia guards were on duty there.

- c. Persons coming to the plant to visit relatives working there were seldom allowed to enter the factory.

- d. To obtain an entry permit into the area, a visitor applied at the administration building, a small building located about 20 meters outside the barbed wire. If the visitor was issued a pass, it was signed, and the time of entry written on it by the militia guard. The visitor was then permitted to proceed to the entrance of the factory. He could not go further. After the visit was concluded, another official, who was on the spot, signed the pass. When the visitor left, the first militia guard checked the signatures, and the visitor returned the pass to the administration building.

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e. [redacted] 50X1-HUM
[redacted] No strangers were
allowed to enter the mines.

f. Passes were not required of villagers living in the vicinity of
the factory or mine. **

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[redacted] Comment: [redacted] acid [redacted] 50X1-HUM
[redacted] was delivered in large glass demijohns and that when these 50X1-HUM
were opened, white fumes dribbled out. This is probably hydrochloric
acid.

[redacted] Comment: It is not clear whether these passes referred to are 50X1-HUM
entrance passes or permits to move about in the vicinity of the factory
and mine, but it is believed that the latter is [redacted] means. 50X1-HUM

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